

SEATTLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

2007 Workplan

The 2007 workplan is constructed on the results of the community feedback process that was implemented in 2006. The process consisted of five district community forums together with a survey for completion in which the public was asked to identify the top three issues in their individual communities and in the City of Seattle generally. The top three issues in the communities and in the City of Seattle as identified in the surveys were:

- ☞ Homelessness/Housing
- ☞ Economic Disparity in education, employment and wages
- ☞ Public Safety – police relations

The SHRC has also identified internal elements of focus for increased effectiveness and has established a Taskforce on SHRC Operations that is included in the SHRC 2007 workplan

HOMELESSNESS/HOUSING TASKFORCE

Chaired by Jay Wellington

Goal 1: To work in support of State Representative Miloscia's initiative to develop funding for the 10 year plan and provide 2,500 units of housing to end homelessness in Seattle.

Strategies

- 1) Obtain from State Representative Miloscia's office the details of the initiative so that the Taskforce is fully informed of the details and the process.
- 2) Create a Fact Sheet from the information received for the education of the communities about the plan and the initiative.
- 3) Meet with legislators and stakeholders involved in the Affordable Housing for All Act, staking out those elements in which the SHRC can play a role.

Goal 2: To continue to inform and educate the members of the SHRC and the community on homelessness in Seattle and bring proposals for action to the members for voting.

Strategies

- 1) Explore organizations and stakeholders involved in ending homelessness, and bring speakers to SHRC general meeting.
- 2) Participate in a public information campaign intended to raise awareness of actions to end homelessness and SHRC's part in such actions.
- 3) Will proactively identify and bring to SHRC for support and action, those stakeholders, policies and legislation that seek to extend housing and eliminate homelessness in Seattle.

PUBLIC SAFETY TASKFORCE

Chaired by Michael Fitch

Goal 1 **To research and analyze the current condition of community relations with the Police Department and identify best practices for the development of recommendations and proposals for change.**

Strategies

- 1) Continue dialogue with the SPD, the OPA, OPARB staff, and community organizations,
- 2) Review public surveys such as those of the SHRC, OPA and others, as identified.

2a) *After reviewing the OPA Use of Force Report for 2002-2005, recommend support for the OPA recommendations in that report, especially in regards to the high number of complaints about excessive use of force by people of color.*

- 3) Study the best practices of other similar cities, in order to make recommendations on Public Safety to the Mayor and City Council.
- 4) To improve the OPA Process by making it more accessible and responsive to community members. This includes a recommendation to move the OPA operations from its current location in the basement of SPD Headquarters.

Goal 2: **To examine police operations in terms of training and preparation of police officers to effectively work with the diversity of the communities in Seattle.**

Strategies

- 1) To research methods of police training in the area of cultural diversity in order to recommend additional training if needed.
- 2) .Examine best practices and available resources to make recommendations to the government officials.

DISABILITY TASKFORCE

Chaired by Julian Wheeler

Goal 1: **To improve conditions for the disabled in the City of Seattle.**

Strategies

- 1) Engage in dialogue with SOCR, the City Attorney's office, and other pertinent city and county staff, community organizations to determine the current status and issues related to public accommodations for the disabled
- 2) Use public opinion surveys to obtain feedback and recommendations from the public and other stakeholders
- 3) Research best practices in other similar cities in order to make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council."

ECONOMIC DISPARITY TASKFORCE

Chaired by Angela Tarah

Goal 1: To have a positive impact on equality in education in the Seattle Public Schools.

Strategies

- 1) Consult with SPS staff and other stakeholders on the progress and status of the Racial Disproportionality initiative of SPS that was launched in 2005.
- 2) Invite stakeholders to present to the SHRC meetings to educate the members about issues related to education such as disproportionality, school closures and WASL scores.
- 3) Define those areas for SHRC action and make recommendations to the SPS leadership.
- 4) To link and support existing efforts related to education in the community.

SHRC INTERNAL OPERATIONS TASKFORCE

Chaired by Jim Yearby

Goal 1: To create a new mission and vision statement

Goal 2: To continually monitor processes of operation to facilitate the effective and successful operations of the SHRC in meeting its goals for 2007.

Strategies

- 1) To monitor and provide feedback on the Implementation of the new structure of working in Taskforces instead of Committees

PUBLIC RELATIONS TASKFORCE

Co-chaired by Angela Tarah and Jay Wellington

Goal 1: Continued focus on community relations with SHRC and increasing the visibility and knowledge of the SHRC

Strategies

- 1) Create opportunities for interaction with the public – tables at shopping centers, community events, community organizations, open meetings etc.
- 2) Work collaboratively with other groups in conducting forums and other organized events.
- 3) Continue to use the survey for feedback and information from the community in person and via email.
- 4) To ensure that all residents are equally informed of the SHRC by providing information in the diverse languages spoken in Seattle.

- 5) Develop and maintain an informative and active website that includes information on human rights and a current listing of activities and events in which the public can participate.
- 6) Conduct at least one meeting per quarter in the community to facilitate attendance by the community

Goal 2: To engage the public in the work of the SHRC.

- 1) Create an intern program with the local universities and colleges for increased exposure of the students to the working of government and to expand the capacity of the SHRC to conduct research and analysis related to the work of the SHRC.
- 2) Ongoing recruitment of strong candidates for the Taskforces and for official membership on the SHRC

Goal 3: To efficiently and effectively respond to issues as they arise by coordinating the resources and talents of the SHRC.

Strategies

- 1) Identify the resources and talents on the SHRC to facilitate the assignment or participation in preparing the appropriate response.
- 2) Commit to established timelines and deadlines to respond to issues in a timely manner.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

Chaired by Jim Yearby

Goal 1: To continue to work on the proposed change to the ordinance on the role of the Appeals Committee.

Strategies

- 1) Conduct initial orientations to the change to selected members of the City Council.
- 2) Finalize the proposal and make recommendations to the Mayor's office and City Council.
- 3) Make recommendations to the SHRC members on improving processes, as needed.

Goal 2: To continue to work with SOCR staff in providing excellent service to the citizens of Seattle.

Strategies

- 1) Ongoing identification of areas of improvement and collaborative work with SOCR staff
- 2) Orientation for the incoming commissioners to the work of the Appeals Committee in addition to the process orientation that is provided.